

306 Hatfield Lane
Seymour, CT 06786 P1:42
March 4, 2000

Dear Comissioner,

It has come to my attention that a regulation is being considered that will that will require people to have a medical exam and a hearing test before purchasing a hearing aid. I also understand that this regulation is attempting to do away with the purchase of hearing aids through any means other than an audiologist or a retail center.

Being hearing impaired myself, I am against some of this proposal. I agree it is probaly a good idea to have your hearing checked before purchasing a hearing aid as there may be another option such as surgery or sometimes the removal of impacted ear wax or a foreign object.(In many cases your family physisian can handle this.) However upon discovering that a hearing aid is needed, you should be free to buy one wherever you wish at whatever price you can afford. If it were not for the option of mail-order, I would not be hearing today as I cannot afford the aids offered by Hearing Aid centers or Doctor's offices, and they are not covered by my insurance. In fact, are you aware that most insurance policies do not cover the cost of hearing aids? Not many people can afford the \$1500-\$4500 cost of a device. I went to several centers before purchasing mine through the Excel company; the hearing aid is great, the fit is great & the service has been wonderful; better than the physician I went to.

Without my hearing aid I cannot hear the birds singing, the frogs croaking, neighbors speaking to me, the minister at church, waves crashing on the shore, TV or radio programs, cars approaching. If I had a small child I could not hear it cry or hear my grandchildren talk and without the option of mail-order purchases this is where I would be.

I urge you to consider carefully the consequences of a regulation that would force people to purchase over-priced "name-brand"hearing aids. Many will do without & never hear the things that others take for granted.

Sincerely,



Gayle Romines

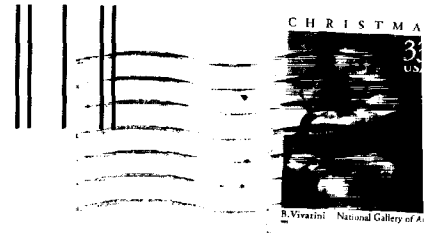
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FROM

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